



The Pipeline

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Unit B1 won the DDS penny wars with its "Twin Towers" display. (See story on page 3.)



Secretary Viola Miller talks to staff at the CFC Connections meeting Thursday in the cafeteria.

Miller talks budget, legislation at CFC Connections meeting

By Anya Armes Weber

About 55 staff attended the third CFC Connections meeting Thursday in the CHR cafeteria to hear about Secretary Viola Miller's "hot topics."

Quality Central Connections (QCC) sponsors the "town meetings" with Secretary Miller. Held quarterly, CFC Connections meetings alternate between Quality Central and regional offices.

Miller opened the meeting with a budget update.

"There is a budget shortfall, but we ought not feel any dramatic affect in the current fiscal year," she said. CFC's finances are in relatively good shape because of the work of the budget office's staff," she said. "We're very fortunate in our cabinet," Miller said. "They're constantly ahead of the curve."

Miller said staff have done well with curbing overtime and travel, and getting through the next lean budget cycle depends on continuing with that.

COA

For the Department of Community Based Services offices to be recently accredited by the National Council on Accreditation for Family and Children Services is a "huge accomplishment that we've been working toward for more than four years," Miller said. Protection and Permanency services to children in every region were found to comply with 800 best practice care standards.

And it's something we all can be proud of, since all staff contributed, Miller said.

"We all are involved in some way," she said. "They didn't just look at the service end, they looked at the guts of the organization, the administration, community partners, everything."

Miller invited all staff to a celebration of the COA accreditation at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 11, in the Capitol rotunda.

Family First

Miller said we've learned from the results of customer satisfaction surveys that 25 percent of our customers didn't feel they got the service they needed from the Cabinet. So the Family First initiative was created consisting of two projects.

First, there's a hotline solely for foster families, which they can call if their caseworkers haven't visited in 30 days, or if they are concerned about the permanency direction of one or more children in their care.

Second, the Louisville SNAP office has become a "co-opted" Family First staff, Miller said. The office will concentrate on children who have spent 12 months or longer in out of home placement with a goal of reunification. "That's long enough," Miller said. "If those parents can't get their act together in 12 months, we need to start making alternative decisions for care."

TANF reauthorization

Last year, the divided Congress didn't approve a welfare reauthorization, though the House did pass President Bush's bill -- HB 4737.

The results of the national elections and the Republican majority in both houses means President Bush's welfare bill will likely be approved next year. The bill will be "tough on Kentucky," Miller said.

The bill would require a 70 percent participation rate and 40 work hours a week with no additional child-care money. "It is grim," Miller said. "But we can't afford not to comply."

Miller said there are a couple of bright spots in the bill: 16 of the 40 hours can be education and 24 must be subsidized or unsubsidized employment.

For an outline of the bill, contact DCBS Deputy Commissioner Cathy Mobley, Miller said.

Legislative issues

Miller said the Cabinet is working on three bills for the upcoming legislative session.

The first is an executive order abolishing the Office of Performance Enhancement. That office will become a part of the Office of the Ombudsman under Director Eleanor Jordan.

Miller said both offices shared the mission of evaluating customer service and outcomes, so administrators saw the opportunity to save money -- about \$400,000, said Teresa Suter, director of the Office of Human Resource Management.

The second bill would mandate that the Cabinet continue COA compliance, even after the current administration.

The third bill would clarify Statute 209 to beef up adult services, Miller said.

To get a copy of any of the three bills, check with Jeff Jagnow, Miller said.

CFSR

Staff asked about the upcoming Child and Family Services Review that's to start in March. Miller said it might be good for her to meet with staff to talk about the specifics of that review.

CFSR is mandated under the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 and centers on the permanency, safety and well being of children in state care. Miller said 22 states have been through the review so far and none has passed, though none has passed COA either.

Miller said CFC is determined to pass CFSR.

Miller said children's well being is "a good thing to look at, but it's hard to measure."

The review also focuses on two main outcomes: reunification and recidivism. Miller said there's a delicate balance between the two. "If we reunify before a family's ready, then we have higher recidivism."

Foster care census

Miller said federal officials have been impressed with the foster care census led by CFC researcher Ruth Huebner. "It's the biggest undertaking of its kind," she said. "We're learning so much about the kids in our care and their families."

"Florida scared me," Miller said about that state's troubles in locating hundreds of foster children. So the census looks at every child in state custody to make sure staff know where every child is. The survey began with children in foster care and will continue with those in private child care, out-of-state-care and kinship care.

Huebner will reveal and discuss results of the census later this month.

Helping others

Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service staff announced that the offices and groups participating in their "Make a

Difference Day" beef stew drive netted 46,000 servings of food from across the state. Food collected in each community will stay in those communities, helping homeless shelters, food banks and senior centers.

Miller mentioned that while about 85 percent of Kentuckians eligible for food stamps receive them, that number plummets when it comes to seniors: Only 33 percent of those eligible receive them.

Seniors might feel they don't qualify for enough money to help anyway, or they may just not like the EBT card, Miller said.

When she makes regional Comprehensive Family Services visits, Miller said she suggests that groups looking for a volunteer activity can help seniors by going to the Cabinet office with them to get their EBT card, then grocery shopping with them to help them learn to pay electronically.

About CFC Connections

The first CFC Connections meeting was in May at Quality Central, the second was in August in the FIVCO Service region, and the next will be in early 2003, likely in Western Kentucky.

Learn more online about CFC Connections' sponsor, QCC, at <http://cfenet.state.ky.us/Connections/QCC%20index.asp>.

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Sick leave need

Taressa Woolums, Office of the General Counsel, is in need of sick leave donations. To donate leave time, contact Cheryl Dooley at 564-7900.





KCCVS won CHR's pumpkin decorating contest. Their entries were "The Headless Horseman," "Adopt a Ghost," and "Boo the Clown."



Case Clearance Unit won DDS's pumpkin decorating contest with their twins.

Deadline nears for KECC fund-raising

By Anya Armes Weber

CFC gets closer to its Kentucky Employees Charitable Campaign fund-raising goal as the final deadline nears.

Friday, Nov. 15, is the last day for state agencies to submit their pledges and donations to KECC. Will we reach our goal of \$150,000? Stay tuned to the Pipeline to find out.

Halloween updates

The CHR building's costume contest, pumpkin mania and bake sale raised about \$100, said KECC committee member Michele Lilly. The Kentucky Commission on Community Service and

Volunteerism won the pumpkin contest with its three entries.

The Department of Disability Services' pumpkin decorating contest winner was the Case Clearance Unit. Their pumpkins were displayed as twins "Initial" and "Recon."

DDS's "penny wars" raised \$210.55 for KECC. The winning office was Unit B1, which had 1,788 points and raised \$50.68.

Charity profile: United Ways in Kentucky

This is the fifth of six profiles spotlighting the participating KECC charities.

United Way of Kentucky serves local communities by assisting local United Ways in Kentucky to build healthier and more caring communities. Since 1984, staff has worked with the volunteers and United Way professionals from across the Commonwealth to address the many health and human services needs in their communities.

Twenty-five local United Ways serve 89 Kentucky counties, providing vision, leadership and more than \$53 million in 2000 to efficiently support more than 750 local agencies. Local volunteers help to assure that services like emergency assistance, job training, child care, and many more will be available in communities throughout Kentucky.

The United Way of Kentucky provides training and technical assistance to member United Ways and helps communities that wish to start a United Way. These services are aimed toward enabling and empowering member United Ways to achieve their own missions and accomplish their own local objectives and help Kentuckians build stronger, healthier, and safer communities.

United Way of Kentucky staff also manages the KECC.

Learn more about United Way online at www.uwky.org.

Franklin acting SRA of Bluegrass Rural

By Anya Armes Weber

Susan Franklin has been named acting Service Region Administrator in the Bluegrass Rural Region.

Franklin steps into the position left by Paul Whitman, who retired Oct. 31.

Franklin has more than 32 years experience in Family Support.



Weatherization program helps homes become energy efficient

By Anya Armes Weber

The Kentucky Weatherization Assistance Program (KWAP) deals with more than just "buttoning up" homes to conserve energy. It also helps make homes safer.

The Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children is trying to raise awareness of the program as the weather turns colder. Oct. 30 was recognized as Weatherization Day both nationally and in Kentucky.

The KWAP is administered statewide by the Kentucky's Community Action Agencies (CAAs) and in Jefferson County by the Jefferson County Community Development Division and Louisville's Department of Housing.

The KWAP helps qualifying families conserve energy and pay less in heating costs. Heating systems are evaluated for safety, energy efficiency and fuel and carbon monoxide leaks. Weatherization helps a family save about \$300 in fuel costs annually.

A recent Casey County mobile home fire that killed two young children was reportedly caused by a woodstove's overheated flue. That fire might have

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been prevented through improved energy equipment, said Pat Flowers, a Cabinet program analyst who specializes in weatherization.

In their onsite assessments, weatherization inspectors look for conditions that can cause overheating, Flowers said. A substandard flue would be replaced with a safer triple-wall stainless steel flue that could withstand enormous heat. Even so, using solid fuel (wood) as a primary heat source in a mobile home can be dangerous, Flowers said.

“Solid-fuel heaters require regular maintenance,” he said. “Even the best fuel equipment on the market will fail if not properly cleaned on a routine basis.”

To qualify for weatherization, a family’s total household income must be at or below 125 percent of the poverty level (\$22,625 annual income for a family of four), or a family member must have received SSI or Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP) benefits at some time during the 12 months prior to eligibility determination.

Flowers said the weatherization program’s main goal is lowering a family’s energy usage so they won’t spend so much money trying to stay warm in the winter. But many of the qualifying clients are low-income families living in substandard housing, often with subcode heating equipment, Flowers said. So inspectors first identify and correct unsafe conditions before addressing energy usage.

“We are simply not going to be able to create much energy conservation if a family’s well-insulated dwelling burns down around them,” Flowers said. “The two areas -- energy conservation and safety -- are ...totally linked.”

The Kentucky Weatherization Program has made more than 50,000 homes safer and more energy efficient since its inception in 1978, KWAP administrator Glenna Reed said. Applicants are not required to be homeowners, and single-family homes, multi-family homes and mobile homes are all eligible.

Applications are prioritized according to:

- Whether family members are elderly, disabled or young children;
- Whether young children in the home are at risk of being removed from the home;
- Household income in relation to poverty level;
- Primary fuel type; and
- Fuel costs in relation to household income.

To raise awareness of the weatherization program and energy conservation, CAAs distributed buttons all month announcing “Weatherization Works!” And fourth-graders at Heritage Elementary School in Shelbyville and second-graders from Frankfort’s Bridgeport Elementary School illustrated posters with ideas for saving resources. The students’ tips included “take short showers,” “instead of turning up the heat, wear a sweater,” and “repair broken windows.” The posters are on display in the lobby of Quality Central’s Cabinet for Human Resources Building.

For more information about applying for the Kentucky Weatherization Assistance Program or a list of CAAs in each county, call the Kentucky Association for Community Action at (800) 456-3452 or log onto <http://www.kaca.org/>. In Jefferson County, call the Community Development Division at (502) 574-5138 or the Department of Housing at (502) 574-3107.

For online information about weatherization, log onto: http://cfc.state.ky.us/agencies/Comm_Base/Fam_Support/weatherization/Weatherization%20News.asp

Posters by second-grade students (examples on right) from Bridgeport Elementary School in Frankfort hang in the CHR lobby. Students created the posters, highlighting ways to conserve resources, as part of Weatherization Day, Oct. 30.



Internet filtering system

From Mark F. Bengel - CIO / Executive Director, CFC Office of Technology Services

As part of CFC's increased security, we will soon be implementing a new system designed to protect staff from accessing inappropriate Internet sites. All staff will be phased onto this new system over the next six weeks. This implementation will happen behind the scenes and will have no noticeable impact on daily operations.

The categories of internet sites to be blocked by this new system include pornography, dating, gambling, and personal email sites such as HotMail. Personal email sites are included to protect our network from computer viruses. All email coming into the State's Outlook system are scanned for viruses before being allowed onto the network. Other systems such as "Hotmail" may not be adequately scanned for computer viruses. This will in no way limit your ability to send or receive email to any email address through the State's Outlook email System. We trust that blocking of the other categories of Internet sites will cause you no inconvenience.

Once implemented, attempts to access Internet sites from one of the prohibited categories will result in a warning screen informing you that the site is considered inappropriate as per the Cabinet for Families and Children's Internet Acceptable Use Policy (http://cfc.state.ky.us/ohrm_manual/cha p2/index.htm#Internet). If you experience any difficulties accessing what you consider a legitimate Internet site, please contact our help desk at 564-4316 with the URL of the site in question.